

**CITY OF WESTMINSTER, MARYLAND
MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 11, 2010**

QUORUM:

A meeting of the Mayor and Common Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane, Westminster, Maryland on the evening of October 11, 2010, at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Utz; Council President Halstad; Council Members Albert, Chiavacci, Pecoraro, and Wack; City Administrator and Acting City Clerk Wolf, Acting City Treasurer Ehlers; Chief of Police Spaulding, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Development Beyard, Director of Recreation and Parks Schroers; and City Attorney Levan were present. Director of Public Works Glass was excused from attending.

Geary Milliken, President/CEO at Carroll Lutheran Village, presented Chief Spaulding, Mayor Utz, and Councilman Chiavacci with the President's Award to honor the men and women of the Westminster Police Department for their exemplary service and continuing commitment in serving the Carroll Lutheran Village community. Mr. Milliken explained that the award is the Village's way of recognizing people and organizations that espouse their mission. He recognized that sworn officers and civilian communications staff have, on many occasions, assisted residents who have encountered issues associated with various public safety concerns of a traffic or potential criminal nature. Mr. Milliken invited Chief Spaulding to visit Carroll Lutheran Village so that he could do the presentation in front of the resident community.

Chief Spaulding accepted the award on behalf of the Westminster Police Department, stating that they are the ones out there 24/7 making sure that the Village's residents are safe in their community. He added that the Police Department does espouse community policing and that it has been one of the hallmarks of his administration. He stated that the department cannot do their job without the assistance of the residents, adding that they are the eyes and ear in their community.

MINUTES:

Upon motion of Dr. Wack, seconded by Mr. Chiavacci and unanimously passed, the minutes of the Council meeting of September 27, 2010, were approved.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mayor Utz conducted the public hearing on the Comprehensive Zoning Map Amendment No. CMA 10-1. He opened the hearing at 7:08 pm. Mr. Beyard explained each of the property zoning changes that are incorporated in the amendment. The first property, primarily owned by WMC Development Corporation, is located at the intersection of Route 31 and WMC Drive. The recommended change is from business to a neighborhood commercial zone. Doing this would match the zoning of the shopping center across the street, the Shoppes of Meadow Creek. The second parcel of land, also owned by WMC Development Corporation, is located between Uniontown Road and West Main Street,

facing Route 31. The current zoning is part business and part residential, but the changes would put it into the neighborhood commercial zone. The next change is a piece of property, referred to as the Cornias Property, that it is currently zoned R-20,000 – Residential, but it is designated in the development plan as commercial. To correctly reflect designation the property was recommended for neighborhood commercial zoning. Mr. Beyard explained that the Wakefield Valley property is currently zoned R-20,000, however the Wakefield Valley Development Plan designates the Wakefield Golf Course as open space. To correctly reflect this designation, the property is recommended to be re-zoned conservation. Another recommendation came by the request of the Carroll County Industrial Development Authority. Mr. Beyard stated that the IDA owns a small parcel of land, about 2.3 acres, at Independence Way and Magna Way. They requested that this property be re-zoned from a Restricted Industrial to Business. Another parcel that would change, owned by St. Johns Catholic Church, is a three acre piece at the intersection of Wimert Avenue and Route 140. It is currently zoned R-7,500, a residential zone, and St. Paul's requested it to be re-zoned Business. Mr. Beyard explained that the rezoning of the properties along the Route 27 Corridor in downtown Westminster, consisting of 27.9 acres, from Central Business and Downtown Business to Mixed Use Infill zoning is in keeping with the recommendation of the Planning Commission and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The change would also meet the Mayor and Common Council's longstanding vision for the Route 27 corridor redevelopment. The next piece of property is located at Cranberry Road/Route 140 and owned by the Tennant family, who owns the Midas Muffler franchise. The property is currently divided with over half in business and the remaining small piece as residential. The recommendation was to put it all into the business zoning. Mr. Beyard stated that the final parcel to be changed is a piece that Thomas Bennett Hunter, Inc. purchased next to their business. The change would put that use from its current as residential into restricted industrial so that they could park vehicles. He concluded his presentation by saying that all other zoning will remain the same. He added that staff and Planning Commission recommend favorable action.

Mr. Chiavacci questioned if Mr. Beyard had any ideas as to what St. John's plans to do with the piece of land at the corner of Wimert Avenue and Route 140. Mr. Beyard responded that the church was interested in a relatively low-impact commercial user such as a drug store or restaurant.

Mr. Pecoraro inquired about the reasons behind changing the zoning of the Technology Park from Restricted Industrial to business, since talk in the past has been to preserve this area for industrial uses. Mr. Beyard explained that the request came from the Industrial Development Authority with the thinking that there are not a lot of businesses in that area that supported the users, such as a drug store or restaurant. He added that there are not a lot of services close by that they could go to and the parcel of land is relatively small.

Mayor Utz recognized that two citizens in the audience signed in to speak regarding the Comprehensive Zoning Map Amendment.

Isaac Menasche of 179 East Main Street spoke on behalf of the Industrial Development Authority of Carroll County, which is the owner of the 2.3 acre parcel at the Marada Industrial Park. He explained that the IDA purchased the Westminster Technology Park in 2001 and has been developing the 64 acre Park since. He stated that this parcel of land is

continuous with the Park. He added that there have been significant requests by perspective tenants or purchasers to have onsite amenities. Rather than utilize the fully developed site for commercial purposes, the IDA thought that it would be ideal to have some minor amenities there. The Park itself will remain fully industrial, which currently has General Dynamics is currently a tenant and Conewago Enterprises has purchased 15 acres. A third of the Park is developed and the IDA is looking for quality members. Mr. Menasche concluded by saying that the Industrial Development Authority is fully in favor of the request, adding that it will be complimentary and it will serve the growth well and allow it to fully develop.

Dr. Wack asked Mr. Beyard whether the changes to the Cornias property would have any effect on the Wakefield Valley Community Trail since it goes through that property. Mr. Beyard explained that a portion of the trail goes through the Cornias property, but the City has worked with the property owner to get the easements necessary to mitigate any future impacts.

Ethan Seidel of 37 Ridge Road and the Vice President of Operations at WMC Development Corporation, which is the owner of two of the parcels that are being rezoned, recognized that both parcels are changing in different directions. He stated that one parcel is going from a business to a neighborhood commercial zone. He explained that, with a couple of exceptions, the changes do not have a major impact since WMC Development Corporation does not foresee future development that is not compatible with neighborhood commercial zoning. Dr. Seidel stated that residential development is currently not an accepted use in neighborhood commercial zoning. He added that they have a comprehensive plan that was done by Land Design Research that always called for some type of mixed use on the remaining undeveloped land that is there, especially given its topography. He explained that the land really lends itself to some type of blend of commercial and residential which would be consistent with being a commercial zone that abuts with a neighborhood. WMC would like to see a text amendment that would allow for that use within the neighborhood commercial zone. He stated that they had the same thought for the property between Main Street and Uniontown Road. Dr. Seidel explained that prior to the water situation hitting and the economy issues; the WMC Development Corporation has a developer that was interested in doing some type of low-rise, mixed used workforce housing combination. They felt that the project was ideal, but technically not doable in a neighborhood commercial zoned area, though it would not take much of an adjustment to make that possible.

Dr. Seidel continued to say that another issue is that hotels are not an accepted use in a neighborhood commercial zone, but there is already a hotel on their property. He clarified that the WMC Development Corporation still owns the land and the building even though the business was sold. He stated that he had no doubt that the City would grandfather the existence of the hotel in the neighborhood commercial zone, but it could restrict their ability in the future if they want to relocate the hotel on that property. He added that this was just an option and it would be more consistent with the neighborhood commercial zoning because they could move the hotel to a less conspicuous site. Dr. Seidel expressed that their concerns were not with the current administration, but down the road. He recommended that the text be written to say the hotel is allowed within the same property or same owner.

Mr. Pecoraro questioned what the advantage was to WMC Development Corporation of changing the zoning of the site where the shopping and the hotel currently exist. He pointed out that they have already largely developed the site and have done a good job even though the standards were not in place at the time.

Mr. Beyard responded that they were trying to provide consistency with the zoning of the Village of Meadow Creek and the vacant properties. He added that they would be consistent and have the same rules for its development. He stated that it does not do as much good for WMC Development Corporation as it does for the community and how it fits.

Dr. Seidel added that he feels the change will not cause great harm as long as accommodations are made for their requests. He noted that originally that whole area was surrounded by agriculture and no one knew how that area would evolve.

Mr. Pecoraro requested clarification that current business zoning of the shopping center and hotel does not permit the type of mixed use that Dr. Seidel mentioned. Mr. Beyard stated that was one of the reasons why there were discussions on the change, so that they could try to incorporate some residential into it. He added that rather than the map changing, it would be the text that would have to be amended.

Dr. Seidel responded that they are aware that it does not permit the kinds of mixed use that is provisioned in the new mixed use zone, but they have been under the assumption that residential is a permitted use in a business zone. Mr. Beyard added that there is probably residential use allowed, but he was not sure to what extent.

Dr. Wack inquired that since the hotel is being grandfathered in, would renovation or relocation of that property constitute as a break within that use and would it then cause a problem. Ms. Levan stated that ordinarily that would depend on the expansion or the enlargement. Mr. Beyard added that it would be a nonconforming use, but it would take some special language in the City's zoning ordinance to deal with the question.

Dr. Seidel explained that it is possible that as the community grows, it would make sense that the hotel would expand, so they want to be certain that expansion will not be limited by the changes in the zones.

Mr. Chiavacci stated that he feels that the hotel should be allowed to expand since there is currently not enough hotel space in the community for some of the needs. He stated that he understood the consistency aspect with the parcel of land across the street, but questioned why the change of the text language, why not leave it as is. Mr. Beyard explained that the text of the zone may still need to change to reflect the mixed use to the extent that they want.

Mr. Chiavacci asked Dr. Seidel which property they were discussing having the mixed use zoning. Dr. Seidel stated that potentially, either site could be used, but it would depend on the design. He added that the developer is going to try to find what works best then they have to decide if it fits the parameter.

Mr. Pecoraro stated that he was under the impression that there was very little developable land left there around that parcel due to the constraints of the drainage pond. Dr. Seidel clarified that there is approximately 12 to 15 acres available.

Mr. Chiavacci stated that given the history of the WMC Development Corporation and how they have handled themselves in what they have done, he feels that he would like to see the City heed their suggestions. He added that they have the track record to prove that they have done a wonderful job with development.

With no more comments and no opposition, Mayor Utz closed the public hearing and the record at 7:38 pm.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Mr. Chiavacci moved to approve the Consent Calendar, which consisted of the lease agreement between Fallfest, Inc. and the City of Westminster for the Community Building. Dr. Wack seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Utz reported that he, along with the members of the Law Enforcement Committee met with the Fraternal Order of Police and their representatives in the Police Department. He stated that there was open and good discussion and that the bulk of the information was taken by staff to get further details and information back to them.

Mr. Chiavacci added that he felt the meeting was very informative and that a lot of their concerns had already presented to the Mayor and Common Council by Chief Spaulding. He feels that they walked away with a better sense that they were being represented.

President Halstad stated that he felt it was a very candid discussion. He sensed that they wanted to make sure that when things turn around, the City stays competitive so that the Police department can get high quality officers to do the job.

Mayor Utz then reported that he gave the opening remarks for the annual Forestry Workshop. He thanked Mr. Beyard and his staff for putting the event together. He noticed that this year's event was better attended than last. Mayor Utz added that a few questions were received by the Commission members regarding tree issues, not negative, but safety concerns with trees and leaves covering up lights on Main Street.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:

Mrs. Albert reported that the City of Westminster clock now has new, working hands thanks to the efforts of David Booth, Jr., the Public Works staff, and contributors to the community foundation clock tower fund. She added that other necessary repairs are forthcoming. Mrs. Albert suggested that a formal recognition be issued for the clock work being done. The Mayor and Common Council agreed to move forward on the recognition.

Mr. Pecoraro reported that he taped a brief feature on the Tri-Street Committee report with the Community Media Center for the community television station. He also complimented Mayor Utz and President Halstad on the well-written letter that was sent to the Carroll County Board of License Commissioners regarding the Rafael's issue. Finally, Mr. Pecoraro mentioned that he ran into Ms. Beatrice Wolfe recently and she is doing well.

Mr. Chiavacci reported that the Recreation and Park Advisory Board met recently to discuss the \$139,000 grant that the City received to install a park facility on the municipal pool property. He stated that several bids were received and the top three were presented to the Board on October 5th. He reported that he, as well as the rest of the Board, was really impressed with all the presentations, but that there was one in particular that stood out far above the others. Mr. Chiavacci expressed his excitement over the project and stated that he cannot believe that the City is going to get such a great facility for only \$139,000.

Dr. Wack reported on updates from the Finance Committee. He explained that, in response to questions from Council members and following up on the Mayor's goals to improve the transparency and accountability of the City's finances, the Committee has been meeting with Ms. Wolf and Mr. Ehlers to discuss ways to improve the financial reporting capabilities. He stated that once the audit is complete and information is received back, they should be able to put forth some specific recommendations for the Mayor to consider.

Mr. Chiavacci inquired as to whether that will mean the Council will be able to see more regular reports. Dr. Wack responded that that is one of the goals. He explained that the Committee has had some very detailed conversations with the Finance department regarding digging into the constraints that hinder the ability to receive regular detailed reports

Mr. Chiavacci request clarification on how they are unable to get the information that is needed.

Dr. Wack explained that the entire financial system is not installed and that which is installed is not optimally configured. He added that the data is in the system, but it is not readily retrievable, nor is it retrievable in a way that reports can be generated as accurate and rapid as they would like them to be. Dr. Wack stated that some of it requires manual changes due to how the data is configured in the system. He added that they are not finished with fully implementing the financial system in ways that make the work process more efficient, so things are still being done the way they used to be before the system. Dr. Wack stated that now that the City has that system, changes need to be made on how things are done. The process has not fully worked its way through the Finance department, let alone the whole organization. He explained that some of it will require training and reorganization. He summarized by saying that they need to finish and perfect the final implementation of the financial software, but also have to finish the work on reorganizing how the City functions so that we can take the best advantage of the system that was bought.

Mr. Chiavacci confirmed that the information ultimately gets there, but it is just a matter of

the way it gets there.

Dr. Wack stated that the key is producing the reports efficiently. The reports can be produced, but they cannot be produced as rapidly as preferred without adversely affecting other aspects of the department's function. He added that it is moving the data through the system and getting it out so that management decisions can be made and the public can see what it going on.

Ms. Wolf clarified that all department heads are looking at very detailed line item reports. She explained that the problem comes from summarizing those line item reports into a management report, but they cannot be summarized until all the data is taken out of the Eden system and manually put into a spreadsheet.

President Halstad recognized and thanked Ms. Levan for preparing the letter to the Board of License Commissioners. He stated that she did a nice job expressing how it is reasonable for a citizen to put up with some degree of noise several times a year. Finally, President Halstad recommended the approval of the Mayor's request to hold Halloween Trick-or-Treating on Sunday, October 31st. The recommendation was approved by affirmation.

BIDS:

Mr. Schroers summarized that the City was awarded \$140,000 from Community Parks and Playground Grant Funding. This grant is specifically from the State of Maryland to redevelop inner-city parks. He added that the Green's Playground, which is enclosed inside the municipal pool complex, is one of the last wooden play structures that the City has left and it was appropriate that it go into a redevelopment phase. Mr. Schroers stated that the specification document for the \$139,000 design build project was put out for bids on September 8th by the Recreation and Parks Department. He continued to say that on September 29th, the City received six bids from vendors for the purchase of playground equipment. The department narrowed the selection and the top three vendors, who gave their presentations to a select panel that included members of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, pool members, and swim team members. The panel selected Playground Specialists, Inc. to have the best value for the lump sum of \$139,000. Mr. Schroers explained that Playground Specialists has done work in the past for the City, including King Park and the Lion's Club play structure at the City Park. He thoroughly explained, to the Mayor and Common Council, all the aspects and details of the recommended design. He stated that \$1,000 of the grant funding will be used for a sign recognizing the State and the Community Parks and Playground Grant Funding. Mr. Schroers requested that the Mayor and Common Council approve the purchase of the playground equipment from Playground Specialists in the amount of \$139,000.

Mr. Chiavacci emphasized that no City funds will be used in this project.

Upon motion of Dr. Wack and seconded by Mr. Chiavacci, the bid from Playground Specialists, Inc. in the amount of \$139,000 was approved.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:

Mr. Beyard summarized that the introduction of Ordinance No. 816 would add new Article VIVD to Chapter 164 of the City Code titled "Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone." He stated that based on the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the City recognizes the importance of preserving the historic character and physical setting of Westminster. Westminster's traditional residential neighborhoods and small town charm are viewed as an attraction by current residents. One of the great strengths of the City is its traditional residential neighborhoods, containing historic homes, well-maintained structures, and families living in these communities that take great pride in their homes. Without a zone like the Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone, there is potential in the underlying zones for uses that may not be appropriate. Mr. Beyard explained that this is not historic zoning, but a way to preserve the character of a neighborhood as it exists now by ensuring that the uses that do not fit would not be allowed. This would be an overlay that would control the uses that would be allowed, but would not change the underlying zone. He stated that Planning and Zoning Commission will be holding a public hearing on October 14th and the Mayor and Common Council would hold a public hearing on November 8th. Mr. Beyard recommended the Mayor and Common Council introduce Ordinance No. 816 for consideration. Mr. Pecoraro motioned to approve the recommendation. Dr. Wack seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

President Halstad stated that Ordinance No. 819 goes along with the Comprehensive Zoning Map Amendment No. CMA 10-1, which was the topic of the public hearing earlier in the meeting. He questioned how the Mayor and Common Council would like to handle the proposed amendments that might be incorporated based on the comments that were made during the hearing.

Mr. Beyard reminded the Mayor and Common Council of the requests by the WMC Development Corporation. They requested flexibility in the text so that in the future if they want to relocate the hotel on the property, they can do so. He explained that it would not be a problem since the City could do that by a text amendment. It does not have anything to do with the action before the Mayor and Common Council. Mr. Beyard stated that the second issue pertains to the residential use that would be allowed in the Neighborhood Commercial zone. He explained that that request would be a question of determining the intensity and working with WMC Development Corporation to arrive at the correct answer. He went on to say that those are the only two items that would be required in the text and neither of those would be a problem since they have nothing to do with the maps.

Dr. Wack requested confirmation if the map and the text are two separate steps.

Mr. Beyard clarified that the text is comprised of rules and the map is the proposed area and that they need to make sure the rules fit the area so that they can do what needs to be done to be competitive and viable.

President Halstad questioned whether there was anything in the written decision that would prove problematic.

Mr. Beyard stated that there would be no problems.

Mr. Pecoraro reminded those who were not on the Council at the time, about the discussions that were had when they originally enacted the Neighborhood Commercial zones and some of the concerns that people raised at the time and the ways they tried to accommodate those concerns. One of the concerns was that the Neighborhood Commercial zones allowed the Mayor and Common Council a degree of control over commercial development adjacent to residential neighborhoods. This was done due to high profile properties in the City that were about to be developed or was thought to be developed in the future that were adjacent to neighborhoods and the Common Council wanted to ensure that the way the development took place was not unduly intrusive and would enhance the community. He continued to explain that a lot of design standards were set and a requirement that the Mayor and Common Council had a role in approving the development since they wanted to make sure that, if they were making a promise to the neighborhoods that it was going to be done the right way. This process was inserted to ensure that the current and future Mayor and Common Council would be in the position to try to get a feel of what the community wanted and needed and stay with that plan. Mr. Pecoraro stated that he feels the mixed use development with the residential component is a good use in the Neighborhood Commercial zone and, if they continue to do it the right way, will be in keeping with what the neighborhood would have a right to expect.

Mr. Pecoraro stated that he is hesitant with the hotel piece. He explained that hotels were specifically excluded at the time. The City was aware that there was a community that did not want to see a hotel adjacent to their neighborhood. Mr. Pecoraro suggested in terms of accommodating the continued existence and future changes to a hotel, which is a part of Westminster's economic activity, they grandfather in that use in whatever form it is going to take on that property without having to apply all of the Neighborhood Commercial zones in the City. That would protect an important asset in the community.

Mr. Chiavacci questioned whether it would make sense to bring the text along with the ordinance.

Mr. Beyard stated that instead of rushing the process, the City needs to work with WMC Development Corporation and their requests to get everything in order. He recommended that Mayor and Common Council provide approval of the introduction of Ordinance No. 819 – Adoption of Comprehensive Zoning Map Amendment No. CMA 10-1 and accompanying written decision as recommended by the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Pecoraro motioned to approve the recommendation. Dr. Wack seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Beyard summarized that Ordinance No. 820 would update Chapter 119 "Property Maintenance" of the City Code to the 2009 standards. He explained that this was a recommendation of the Tri-Street Area Advisory Committee and then was further discussed at some of the business focus groups that were held. He stated that the City's current property code is based on the 1998 edition of the International Property Maintenance Code, which has existed in the City since the early 2000's.

Mr. Pecoraro asked Mr. Beyard what version the County is currently using.

Mr. Beyard replied that the County uses the State Livability Code, as well as their County ordinance. He went further to say that the City of Westminster utilized this until the early 2000's. The Mayor and Common Council then made a decision to go a different direction since they were not satisfied with the standards or the enforcement. Mr. Beyard recommended the approval of the introduction of Ordinance No. 820. Mrs. Albert motioned to approve the recommendation. Mr. Chiavacci seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Ms. Wolf reported that November 4th will be a very busy day in the City of Westminster. The day will start at 9:00 a.m. with the McDaniel Meets Main Street tour with the President, Vice-President, and other officials from McDaniel College. She continued to say that the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission will be arriving at 11:00 a.m. Ms. Wolf explained that they are very interested in how counties and cities work together. The City will talk to the fifty members, which includes a mix of legislators and key staff, about water and what the City has done with the water resources coordinating committee and what the County has done to help out with the water situation. They will then spend some time at Union Crossing and a variety of other illustrations of partnerships. She added that at 3:00 p.m., the Maryland Department of Transportation will be here for their capital program tour. She explained that this will entail a presentation of what they are going to be doing in Carroll County in the next 35 years and then a tour of some of the sites. She also reported that the annual Employee Expo will be held November 4th at the Longwell Armory. Ms. Wolf then announced that the Jennifer Mellor has been selected as the September Employee of the Month for her work on Fallfest. Ms. Mellor chaired the event, which is a yearlong commitment, but the workload in September requires great organizational skills and the ability to manage volunteers, vendors, sponsors, and guests. Finally, Ms. Wolf explained that she gave the Mayor and Common Council each a copy of an article published in the Baltimore Sun. She explained that she found it interesting that a newspaper that has three major jurisdictions with no incorporated municipalities saw it fit to publish an article that says municipalities should get their Highway User Revenue back.

Mr. Ehlers reported that the first draft of the financial statements is completed and has been delivered to the external auditor. He added that most of the fieldwork is completed and there are only a few issues to go on the single audit.

Mr. Schroers reported that 120 couples attended the annual Mother/Son Date event at Martin's Westminster on October 6th. He reminded the Mayor and Common Council that the annual Daddy/Daughter Date event, also at Martin's Westminster will be held on October 13th. He also reported that the staff is working hard to get ready for the October 30th Halloween Bench Press competition at the Family Center. This event usually draws a lot of competitors from around the State.

President and C.E.O. of the Westminster Fire and Hose Company No. 1 Bob Cumberland reported that September was a busy month for the fire department. They answered 112 fire calls with 49 of them being in the City, which increased their call load by 69 over last year. He stated that there was an average turnout of eight people per call and the fire loss is at \$566,950 to date. He continued to say that they received 386 EMS calls in September

with 176 of those calls in City limits. They staffed their third unit 62 times for the month; giving them a total 518 times that unit was staffed. He also reported that the County approached the fire department regarding refunding the bond on the new fire station as long as the department can get through all the legal ramifications by October 18th. He explained that the interest rate would be substantially less. Next, Mr. Cumberland reported that they had their open enrollment with the insurance for their career staff. He feels that they were able to accommodate them with affordable health insurance. Finally, he reported that they received their annual audit back with seven minor deficiencies to fix to bring them up to better bookkeeping.

Mr. Beyard followed up on the Mayor's Report regarding the Forestry Workshop. He explained that the attendance was up 125% over last year. He recognized McDaniel for the great service that they provided for the event.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Lori Graham of 118 Pennsylvania Avenue recognized the Westminster fire department by stating that the citizens appreciate how busy they are and what they do each and every day. She explained that during Fallfest they needed ambulance service twice, and neither time did they get a Westminster ambulance due to their responding to other calls. She reported that preparations for Miracle on Main Street are moving forward nicely. They have received lots of parade applications. They have gotten two small bands to participate, but they are still working on getting a high school band. She stated that they are hoping to receive some sponsorship money in the coming week.

George Clift of 146 Pennsylvania Avenue expressed his concerns with the college students that rent the house next door. He stated that the noise level at night and inappropriate language has gotten out of control. He feels that this group of students is the worst he has seen in over ten years. He also stated that he feels that there are a lot of code violations at that address regarding trash and high grass.

Mr. Chiavacci recommended that a meeting with himself, Mr. Clift, Chief Spaulding, and possibly a representative from the College would be worth pursuing to solve some of these issues.

ADJOURN:

Council President Halstad adjourned the meeting at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth L. Fahey